(a) the details of the firm to whom the contract of Dulhasti Power Project has been awarded and year in which the contract was finalised;

(b) the original and estimated revised cost and the present status of the project at present;

(c) whether any delay in the execution of the project has been noticed; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the time by which the project is likely to become functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The Dulhasti Project was sanctioned in 1989 for turn-key execution to a French Consortium of firms consisting of M/s Coyne Et Bellier (COB); M/s Dumez, Sogea & Borie (DSB); M/s CEGELEO; M/s COMELEX; and M/s SEITP;

(b) The original sanctioned cost of the Project was Rs. 1262.97 crores (at October 1988 price level). The revised cost of the project is Rs. 3559.77 crores (at November 1996 price level). After withdrawal of the French Civil Contractor (M/s DSB), NHPC took over the plant and machinery of the DSB and the civil works were taken up departmentally. With a view to completing the balance civil works. NHPC has awarded the contract to a new civil contractor (a Consortium of Indian and Norwegian firms). The required funds for completion of the project will be provided. In dam area 96 per cent excavation and 25 per cent converting have been completed. In the 10.6 KM long underground head race tunnel 35.8 per cent excavation has been completed. In underground power house area, excavation of power house cavern and transformer gallery is almost complete. The progress of supply of electrical, mechanical and hydro mechanical equipments is 93 per cent. Other works are also progressing satisfactorily.

(c) and (d) Yes. Sir. There has been a delay in execution of the project which was originally to be completed in July 1994. However. work on the project was suspended in August 1992 by the French consortium due to the alleged disturbed security environment. The letter of award for the execution of the balance civil work was given to the new agency in March 1997. The estimated time schedule for completion of the project is March 2001.

[Translation]

Artificial Heart Valve

159. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :
SHRIMATI PURNIMA VERMA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether an artificial heart valve has been developed in India;

(b) if so, whether it has been tested and found suitable,

(c) if so, the estimated cost of the artificial heart valve developed in the country; and

(d) the steps taken to develop this valve on large scale for the benefit of heart patients?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. An artificial heart valve has been developed by Shri Chitra Tirunal Institute of Science & Technology, Kerala and has been tested and found to be safe and comparable to other similar valve in clinical field.

(c) and (d) The cost of Chitra valve ranges between Rs. 12,500 and Rs. 14,500. One of the Pharmaceutical companies has already undertaken the development of this valve.

Birth Rate

160. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sterilisation operations are not being performed as per the target fixed, and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) and (b) All the family planning methods including sterilisation are being performed in the country under Target Free Approach W.E.F 1st April, 1996. The system of setting centrally determined targets for family planning including Sterilisation operations has been replaced by decentralised participatory planning at the grass root level in each State/U.T. with emphasis on quality of services, quality of Care and Clients satisfaction.